



First Brentwood cherry u-pick opens for season

By [Roni Gehlke](#) | PUBLISHED: May 10, 2017



BRENTWOOD — Nearly 40 years ago a group of Brentwood farmers put the first Brentwood Harvest Time guide together to help direct locals and California visiting tourist to come out and take advantage of the wide variety of seasonal farm fresh fruits and vegetables available throughout the community. Today the guide, in a map format, is still going strong offering directions and information to more than 50 Brentwood and surrounding area growers.

One of the farms listed in this year's Harvest Time is Bloomfield Cherries, which opened last week with the first of the season's cherries. In just two days with dozens of visitors, the u-pick ran out of ripe cherries and had to close for a week or so until the rest of the crop ripened.

Owner Tom Bloomfield remembers when his father was part of the group that started the Harvest Time back in the mid-1970s.

"Bloomfields did u-pick back in the 1970s and 1980s," Bloomfield said. "We did veggies back then."

Bloomfield said that the Harvest Time is great tool for the u-picks. Things slowed down for a while, but Bloomfield said that about six years ago he opened a cherry u-pick orchard on Payne Avenue called Bloomfield Cherries and got back involved with the organization. Bloomfield also owns Cherry Time on Walnut Blvd., which opened its doors a few days after Bloomfield Cherries and looked to have a larger beginning harvest available.

“The Harvest Time is a great tool for those who want to go out u-picking,” said Kishla Henry, a member of Bloomfield team. “One of the most user-friendly parts to the map is the back where it shows a chart of all the fruits and veggies grown in Brentwood and which farms either offer u-pick or already picked items.”

With all the homes growing in Brentwood over the past decade, some local residents didn’t even realize that there were so many u-picks still around in Brentwood. Kelly Greer heard on Facebook that the cherries were ripe and decided to bring her two toddlers out to pick for the morning.

“I thought with all the houses that have been developed in Brentwood that the u-picks were all but gone, but then my friend told me there were dozens out here, so now I’m going to have to come more often,” she said.

“Not all the trees have been turned into two-by-fours,” said Rick Lemyre, who’s offering his services in helping to market the guide.

Lemyre said that there are more than 50 listings of farm produce vendors on this year’s map.

“There are even three wineries on the list this year,” Lemyre said.

In fact, there are also several produce vendors who keep stores open year-round or throughout the growing season like Farmer’s Daughter and Gursky Ranch that sell a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

Guidelines that include no climbing on trees, children are not allowed on ladders and you must buy what you pick and other important tips and information is also included in the Harvest Time. There are even ads from local merchants who help pay for the color printing of the guide.

Lemyre said that there are Harvest Times available throughout town at places like City Hall, the Chamber of Commerce, downtown merchants and even at Brentwood’s downtown farmers market, which may host local farmers, but also features many out of town merchants.

Information that is included in the Brentwood Harvest Time can also be found online on the organization website at harvest4you.com.

Cherry season is usually very short with. Many cherries ready during Memorial Day weekend will be gone before you know it, but there is always another fruit or vegetable ready to pick for those who wish this to be a weekend outing event through the summer. Brentwood also offers a wide variety of fruits and vegetables throughout the spring and summer including almonds, apricots, berries, cucumbers, eggs, grapes, green beans, honey, nectarines, peaches, peppers, plums squash, tomatoes and more.